

THE HONORABLE ROBERT S. LASNIK

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

CITY OF SEATTLE,

Plaintiff,

v.

MONSANTO COMPANY, et al.,

Defendants.

CASE NO. 2:16-CV-00107 RSL

STIPULATION AND ORDER
REGARDING PARTIES' USE OF PRIVATE
DISCOVERY MASTER

I. STIPULATION

Defendants Monsanto Company, Solutia Inc., and Pharmacia LLC ("Defendants") and Plaintiff City of Seattle ("Plaintiff") (collectively, the "Parties") stipulate and agree to the use of the Honorable Paris Kallas of Judicial Dispute Resolution as a private Discovery Master to assist in resolving in a timely and cost-effective manner certain discovery disputes between the Parties.

The Parties stipulate and agree as follows:

1. The Parties shall submit their discovery disputes to a private Discovery Master as provided in this Stipulation. Although the engagement will be modeled after the appointment of a Master under FRCP 53, in the interests of time the parties will not seek the formal appointment of the Master by the Court, nor provide for a report or recommendations by the Master to the Court for adoption.

1 2. The Parties will jointly engage Judge Paris Kallas as a private Discovery Master,
2 for which she will be compensated at her usual and customary rates.

3 3. The Discovery Master's fees and costs will be divided equally, with Defendants
4 bearing 50% and Plaintiff bearing 50%.

5 4. The parties will jointly provide Judge Kallas with a single set of the following
6 materials: 1) Plaintiff's First Amended Complaint (without exhibits) (Dkt. # 31); 2) Defendants'
7 First Amended Answer and Counterclaims (without exhibits) (Dkt. # 91); 3) Order on
8 Defendants' Motion to Dismiss (Dkt. # 60); 4) Order on Plaintiff's Motion to Dismiss (Dkt. #
9 116); 5) Stipulated Order dismissing Defendants' remaining counterclaims (Dkt. # 132); 5)
10 Order on Plaintiff's Motion for a Protective Order (regarding mediation privilege) (Dkt. # 169);
11 and 6) Plaintiff's Damages Disclosure dated August 9, 2021 (Dkt. # 210-4). Each Party will also
12 provide the Discovery Master (and copy the other side) with its summary of the case, consisting
13 of no more than eight pages, by Friday, August 27, 2021.

14 5. The Discovery Master will have the authority to rule on: i) Plaintiff's Motion for
15 Protective Order with Respect to Monsanto's FRCP 30(b)(6) Deposition Notice (Dkt. # 185
16 (May 27, 2021)); ii) Defendants' Motion for Leave to Take Additional Depositions in Light of
17 Plaintiff's Late Designated Witnesses Under RFCEP 26, Or in the Alternative to Strike the Late
18 Designated Witnesses (Dkt. # 198 (July 28, 2021)); and iii) Defendants' Motion for Protective
19 Order with Respect to Plaintiff's FRCP 30(b)(6) Deposition Notice (Dkt. # 205 (Aug. 11, 2021));
20 and iv) future discovery disputes that may arise between the Parties.

21 6. Within one day of referring issues (i) through (iii) described in ¶ 5 to the
22 Discovery Master, the Parties will notify the Court that that they are taking the pending motions
23 off calendar, to be re-noted in the future if necessary.

1 7. The Discovery Master will also have authority to assist the Parties in resolving
2 discovery disputes without resort to motions practice, where reasonably feasible.

3 8. The Discovery Master shall consider the Parties' pending motions described in (i)
4 through (iii) of ¶ 5 in a single hearing, to the extent reasonably feasible.

5 9. The Discovery Master will have the authority to assist the Parties in negotiating
6 other discovery-related scheduling issues, including future modifications to discovery-related
7 deadlines in the revised case scheduling order. Notwithstanding this authority of the Discovery
8 Master, all requests to modify the case schedule must be submitted to the Court for approval,
9 whether by stipulation or by motion.

10 10. The Discovery Master will not have authority to adjudicate the applicability,
11 reach, or scope of any claims or defenses, any liability or damages issues, or the presentation of
12 any witnesses or evidence at trial, all of which would be reserved for the exclusive province of
13 the Article III judge assigned to this matter. In ruling on Defendants' Motion for Leave to Take
14 Additional Depositions in Light of Plaintiff's Late Designated Witnesses Under FRCP 26, Or in
15 the Alternative to Strike the Late Designated Witnesses the Discovery Master will not have the
16 authority to grant Defendants' requested alternative relief, but Defendants reserve the right to
17 seek that relief from the Court, and Plaintiff reserves its rights to oppose such a request.

18 11. The Discovery Master's rulings will not be submitted as recommendations for
19 adoption by the Court, nor will the Discovery Master prepare a report for submission to the
20 Court. Absent the grant of a stay by the district court, no appeal of a Discovery Master's ruling
21 to the district court will stay implementation of that ruling, nor will it modify the case schedule.

22 12. As provided in FRCP 53(f)(2), the parties reserve the right to object to the
23 Discovery Master's rulings, in whole or in part, and submit the issue(s) to which the party
24 objects to the Court for resolution. In addition, any notice of objection to a Discovery Master's
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ruling shall be provided to the opposing party, with a copy to the Discovery Master, within five (5) business days of receipt of the ruling. Any notice of objection shall specify whether the ruling is objected to in whole or in part, and identify the scope of the objection. The Parties agree to submit the issue(s) to the Court pursuant to the Expedited Joint Motion Procedure established in LCR 37(a)(2), which will require the objecting party to timely prepare and submit its LCR 37(a)(2)(B) submission to the opposing party in order to satisfy the deadlines of both LCR 37(a)(2) and FRCP 53(f)(2). The Discovery Master's ruling on the issue(s) submitted to the Court may be offered by a Party as evidence in such a proceeding, but may not be characterized as a recommendation to the Court. A party's objection to a ruling of the Discovery Master shall have no effect on any other rulings.

13. Each party reserves the right to terminate the Discovery Master's engagement upon ten (10) days' written notice to the other party and the Discovery Master. However, to the extent the Discovery Master has any motion or issue under consideration at the time a party elects to terminate the Discovery Master's engagement, any termination will be deferred until, at the earliest, the Discovery Master rules on the motion or issue.

Dated: August 19, 2021

SHOOK HARDY & BACON LLP (STL)

By: s/ Susan L. Werstak
Adam E. Miller, 40945
Susan L. Werstak, 55689
Lisa N. DeBord, 61658
7777 Bonhomme Avenue, Suite 1800
St. Louis, MO 63105
Telephone: (314) 690-0200
Emails: amiller@shb.com
swerstak@shb.com
ldebord@shb.com

Jennifer L. Campbell, WSBA No. 31703
 Connie Sue M. Martin, WSBA No. 26525
SCHWABE WILLIAMSON & WYATT
 1420 5th Avenue, Suite 3400

Seattle, WA 98101
Telephone: (206) 622-1711
Emails: jcampbell@schwabe.com
csmartin@schwabe.com

Donald F. Zimmer Jr., CSBA No. 112279
(Admitted Pro Hac Vice)
Troy McMahan, CSBA No. 148694
(Admitted Pro Hac Vice)
KING & SPALDING LLP
50 California Street, Suite 3300
San Francisco, California 94111
Phone: (415) 318-1200
Emails: fzimmer@kslaw.com
tmcmahan@kslaw.com

Peter Hsiao
(Admitted Pro Hac Vice)
KING & SPALDING LLP
633 West Fifth St. Suite 1600
Los Angeles, CA 90071
Email: phsiao@kslaw.com

Richard L. Campbell
SHOOK HARDY & BACON LLP (MA)
125 Summer Street, Suite 1220
Boston, MA 02110
Email: rcampbell@shb.com

Thomas M. Goutman
SHOOK HARDY & BACON LLP (PA)
Two Commerce Square
2001 Market Street, Suite 3000
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Email: tgoutman@shb.com

*Attorneys for Defendants Monsanto Company, Solutia
Inc., and Pharmacia LLC*

KELLER ROHRBACK L.L.P.

By: s/ Michael D. Woerner

By: s/ Amy Williams-Derry

By: s/ Daniel P. Mensher

By: s/ Alison Gaffney

By: s/ Rachel E. Morowitz

By: s/ Adele A. Daniel

Michael D. Woerner, WSBA #15452

Amy Williams-Deify, WSBA #28711

Daniel P. Mensher, WSBA #47719

Alison Gaffney, WSBA #45565

Rachel E. Morowitz, WSBA #53371

Adele A. Daniel, WSBA #53315

1201 Third Avenue, Suite 3200

Seattle, WA 98101

Tel.: (206) 623-1900

Fax: (206) 623-3384

Email: mwoerner@kellerrohrback.com

Email: awilliams-derry@kellerrohrback.com

Email: dmensher@kellerrohrback.com

Email: agaffney@kellerrohrback.com

Email: nnorowitz@kellerrohrback.com

Email: adaniel@kellerrohrback.com

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

By: s/ Peter S. Holmes

By: s/ Laura B. Wishik

Peter S. Holmes, WSBA #15787

Laura B. Wishik, WSBA #16682

701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2010

Seattle, WA 98104-7097

Tel.: (206) 684-8200

Email: Laura.Wishik@seattle.gov

STOLL BERNE

Keith Ketterling, OSB No. 913368

Yoona Park, OSB No. 077095

Jennifer S. Wagner, OSB No. 024470

Steve D. Larson, OSB No. 863540

Elizabeth K. Bailey, OSB No. 172956

209 SW Oak Street, Suite 500

Portland, OR 97204

Telephone: (503) 227-1600

Facsimile: (503) 227-6840

Email: kketterling@stollberne.com

Email: ypark@stollberne.com

Email: jwagner@stollberne.com

Email: slarson@stollberne.com

Email: ebailey@stollberne.com

Attorneys for Plaintiff City of Seattle

ORDER

It is so ORDERED. Judge Paris Kallas shall act as a private Discovery Master in accordance with the foregoing stipulation of the parties.

Dated August 23, 2021.



The Honorable Robert S. Lasnik